South, Robert

A

SERMON

Preach'd on the

Anniversary-FAST

FOR THE

MARTYRDOM

OF

King CHARLES I.

At COURT.

In the Last CENTURY.

Bene Agere & male Pati Regium est.

JUDGES XIX. 30.

And it was so, that all that saw it said, There was no such thing done or seen from the Day that the Children of Israel came up out from the Land of Egypt unto this Day; consider of it, take Advice, and speak your Minds.

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JUDGES XIX. 30.

And it was so, that all that saw it said, There was no such thing done or seen from the Days that the Children of Israel came up out from the Land of Egypt unto this Day; consider of it, take Advice and speak your Minds.

THERE is a certain fatal Pertinency in the very Phrase of the Text; for when there were Judges, there was no King in *Israel* (tho' as to the present purpose, they were Judges of another Nature that removed ours.) We have an account of this prodigious and horrid Action, cloathed with all the Circumstances of Wonder and Detestation, but yet well timed for its Commission, it being done when upon the want of the Regal Power, *Judg.* 21. 25. *Every Man did what was right in his own Eyes*; or, in another Dialect, *as the Spirit moved him.* And as for the Authors of this exicrable Fact, we have them defending themselves with their Swords, and for some time asserting their Villany with their Success and Victory against their Brethren, twice beaten and massacred before them in a righteous Cause, as you may see in the next Chapter.

I do not profess my self either delighted or skill'd in mystical Interpretations, and to wire-draw the Sense of the Place, so as to make it speak the Death of the King; as some who can interpret Scripture, as if the whole Book of God was only to tell things transacted in *England* and *Scotland*; so that there cannot be so much as an House fired, or a Leg broken, but that they can find it in *Daniel* or the *Revelations.* No, I pretend to no such Skill; it is enough for me if I bring the present Business and the Text together, not by Design, but Accommodation: And as the Phrase runs full and high, so I doubt not but to find such a parallel in the things themselves, that it may be a question whether of the two may have a better claim to the Expression. The Cause here which was worded with so high Aggravations, was an injury done to one single *Levite*, in the villainous Rape of the Concubine; the Resentment of which was so great, that it engaged the rest of the Tribes to Revenge his Quarrel with a Civil War, in which the Pre-eminence and Conduct was given by God's Appointment to the Royal Tribe of *Judah.* The Scepter being most concern'd to assert the Privileges, and revenge the Injuries of the Crosier. We have the *Benjamites* sturdily abetting what they had impiously done, and set a while victorious in Villany, (by the help of God's Providence) trampling on those that Fought by the Warrant of his Precept.

Let us now see the Counter part: He that dates the King's Murder from the fatal Blow given on the Scaffold, judges like him that thinks 'tis the last stroke that fells the Tree; the killing of his Person was only the Consummation of his Murder, first begun in his Prerogative. We have heard the knack of a double Capacity, Personal and Politick, and I suppose

pose they distinguish the King into two, that each Party might Murder him under one. And for those whose Loyalty does only consist in designing that Action which was taken out of their Hands, and having laid the Premises, they protest against the Conclusion; they cover their Prevarication with a Fig-leat, and only differ from the other Party in this, that These endeavour to disguise the Author of the Fact, Those only the Executioner. Well then; when a long Sun-shine of Mercy had ripen'd the Sins of the Nation, so that it was now ready for the shatterings of Divine Vengeance; the Seed of Faction and Rebellion having been for a long time studiously sown by Schismatical Doctrines, and well watered by Seditious Lectures, the first Assault was made against the Tribe of *Levi* by some implacable Enemies of the Church, the fury of whose Lust and Ambition nothing could allay, till they had full scope to prostitute her Honour, and ravish her Revenues, till at length, cut, divided, torn in pieces as she was, she lay a ghastly Spectacle to all Beholders to all the *Israel* of God.

And as this was done to our English *Levites*, so it was acted, I cannot say by *Benjamites*, but rather by so many *Benjamites*; *i. e.* such as reign like Wolfs, till by their Rapine and Sacrilege, they had their Mess five times bigger than their Brethrens. The prosecution of which Quarrel was armed by the Royal Standard, and the Defence of the Church manag'd by the Defender of the Faith; in which it pleased the Able and Wise God, to cause *Judah* to fall before *Benjamin*, the Lyon to be a Prey to the Wolf; by which fatal Trace of Providence, the King being kill'd long before Forty Five; by natural and immediate Sequel to compleat the Action. *Charles* was murder'd in Forty Eight. And this is the black Subject of this Days Solemnity. In my Reflections upon which, if Detestation (that is, a due apprehension of the blackest Fact that ever the Sun saw, since he withdrew upon the Suffering of our Saviour) chance to give an edge to some of my Expressions, let those know, (the nature of whose Actions has made Truth look like a Sarcasm, and Descriptions sharper than Invectives;) I say, let these Censures know (whose Innocency lies only in the Act of Indemnity) that to drop the blackest Ink, and the bittrest Gall upon this Fact, is not Satyr but Propriety.

Now since the Text says, *There was no such thing ever done or seen*, the proper prosecution of the Words, all applied to this Occasion, must be to shew wherein the strangeness of this Deed consists; and since the nature of every particular Action is to be learnt by reflecting upon the Agent and the Object, with all the retinue of Circumstances that attend it, under a certain determination, I shall accordingly distribute my following Discourse into these Materials: I shall

1. Consider the Person who suffer'd.
2. Shew the Preparation or Introduction to his Suffering.
3. Shew you the Qualities of the Agents who acted in it.
4. Describe the Circumstances and Manner of the Fact.

Lastly, Point out the Destruction and grim Consequences of it.

Of all which in their Order.

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1. He that suffer'd was a King, and what is more, such a King as was not chosen, but born to it; owing his Kingdom, not to the Voice of Popularity, but the Suffrage of Nature; He was a *David*, a Saint, a King, but never a Shepherd: All the Royal Blood in *Christendom* ran in his Veins, *i.e.* many Kings went to the making up of him, and his Improvement and Education fell in ways not below his Extraction. He was accurate in all the commending Excellencies of Human Accomplishments, able to deserve, had he not inherited a Kingdom: Of so controuling a Genius, that in every Science he did not so much Study as Reign; he appear'd not only a Proficient but a Prince; and to go no farther for a Testimony, let his own Writings serve for a Witness, which speak him no less an Author than a Monarch, composed with such an unfailing Accuracy, such a commending majestick πάθος, as if they had been written, not with a Pen, but a Scepter; and as for those whose virulent and ridiculous Calumnies ascribe that incomparable Work to others, 'tis sufficient Argument that those did not write, because they could not write it. 'Tis hard to counterfeit the Spirit of Majesty, and the Unimmitable Peculiarities of an Incommunicable Genius. At the Council-Table he had Ability enough to give himself the best Council, but the unhappy Modesty to diffide in it, indeed his only Fault; for Modesty is a Paradox in Majesty, and Humility is a Solecism in Supremacy.

Look we next on his Piety and Incomparable Virtues, tho' without any absurdity I may say, that his very Endowments of Nature were Supernatural: so Pious was he, that if Others had measur'd their Obedience to him, by his to God, he had been the most absolute Monarch in the World. As eminent for frequenting the Temple, as *Solomon* for building one: No Occasions ever interfered with his Devotions, nor Business out-dated his time of Attendance in the Church; so firm in the Protestant Cause, tho' he lay in the midst of Temptation, in the very Bosom of *Spain*; and tho' *France* lay in his, yet nothing could alter him, but that he espoused the Cause of his Religion more than his beloved Queen. He ever filled the Title under which we prayed for him. He could defend Religion as a King, dispute for it as a Divine, and die for it as a Martyr. I think that I shall speak a greater Truth in saying, That the only thing that makes Protestantism considerable in *Christendom*, is the Church of *England*; and the only thing that does now cement and confirm the Church of *England*, is the Blood of that Blessed Martyr. He was so well skilled in all Controversies, that we may well Stile him in all Causes Ecclesiastical, not only Supreme Governor but Moderator, nor more fit to fill the Throne than the Chair; and, withal, so Exact an Observer and a Royal Rewarder of all such Performances, that it was an Encouragement for a Man to be a Divine under such a Prince. Which Piety of his was set off with a whole train of Moral Vertues. His Temperance was so great and impregnable amidst all those Allurements with which the Courts of Kings are apt to melt the most Stoical and resolved Minds, that he did at the same time both teach and upbraid the Court; so that it was not so much their own Vices, as his Virtue,

tue, that render'd their Debauchery inexcuſable. Look over the whole Race of our Kings, and take in the Kings of *Iſrael* to boot, and whoever kept the Bonds of Conjugal Affection ſo inviolate. *David* was chiefly eminent for Repenting in this Matter; *Charles* for not needing Repentance. None ever of greater Fortitude of Mind, which was more reſplendent in the Conqueſt of himſelf, and in thoſe miraculous Inſtances of his paſſive Valour, than if he had ſtrewn the Field with the Rebels Arms, and to the Suffrage of his own Cauſe, joyned the Succeſs of theirs; and yet, withal, ſo Meek, ſo Gentle, ſo Merciful, and that even to Cruelty to himſelf, that if ever the Lion dwelt with the Lamb; if ever Courage and Meekneſs were united, it was in the Breaſt of this Royal Perſon; and which makes the Rebellion more ugly and intolerable, there was ſcarce any Perſon of Note among his Enemies, who did not wear his Colours, and carry ſome particular mark of his Favour and Obligations: ſome were his own menial Servants, and eat Bread at his Table, before they lifted up their Heel againſt him: ſome received from him Honours, ſome Offices and Employments. I could mention Particulars of each kind, did I think their Names fit to be heard of in a Church, or from a Pulpit. In ſhort, he ſo behaved himſelf toward them, that their Rebellion might be Malice indeed, but could not be Revenge.

And theſe his Perſonal Virtues ſhed a ſuitable influence upon his Government for the ſpace of 17 Years; the Peace, Plenty and Honour of the *Engliſh* Nation ſpread it ſelf even to the Envy of all Neighbouring Countries; and when that Plenty had pamper'd them into Unrulineſs and Rebellion, yet ſtill the Juſtice of his Government left them at a loſs for an Occaſion to Rebel, till at laſt Ship-Money was pitch'd upon as fit to be reform'd by Exciſe and Taxes, and the burden of the Subjects took off by Plunderings and Sequeſtrations. The King now, to ſcatter that Cloud which began together, and look Black upon the Church and State, made thoſe Condeſcentions to their Impudent Petitions, that they had ſcarce any thing to make War for, but what was granted them already; and having thus ſtript himſelf of his Prerogative, he left it clear to the World, that there was nothing left for them to fight for but only his Life. Afterwards, in the proſecution of this unnatural War, what Overtures did he make for Peace? Nay, when he had his Sword in his Hand, his Armies about him, a Cauſe to juſtifie him before God and Man, how did he chuſe to compound himſelf into nothing? To Depoſe and Un-king himſelf by their hard and inhuman Conditions? But all was nothing: He might as well complement a Maſtiff, or court a Tyger, as think to win thoſe who were now hardned in Blood, and thorough-pac'd in Rebellion. Yet the truth is, his Conſcience Uncrown'd him, as having a Mind too pure and delicate to admit of thoſe Maxims and Practices of State that uſually make Princes Great and Succeſsful.

Having thus with an unheard-of Loyalty fought againſt him, and conquer'd him, they commit him to Priſon: and the King himſelf Notes, that it has always been obſerv'd, that there is but little diſtance between the

Prisons of Kings and their Graves; to which I subjoin, that where the Observation is constant, there must be some standing Cause of the Connexion of the thing observed: and indeed it is a direct Translation from the Prison to the Grave, the difference between them being only this, that he who is Buried is Imprisoned under Ground, and he that is Imprisoned, is Buried above Ground; and I could wish, that as they slew and buried his Body, so we had not also Buried his Funeral.

But, to finish this poor and imperfect Description, tho' it is of a Person so Renowned that he neither needs the best, nor can be injured by the worst: Yet, in short, he was a Prince whose Virtues were as prodigious as his Sufferings, a true Father of his Country, if but for this only, that he was Father of such a Son. And yet the most Innocent of Men and Best of Kings, so Pious and Virtuous, so Learned and Judicious, so Merciful and Obliging; was rebell'd against, drove out of his own House, pursu'd as a Partridge on the Mountains, like an Eagle in his own Dominions, inhumanely Imprisoned, and for a Catastrophe of all, most barbarously Murthered; tho' in this his Murder was the less woful, in that his Death releas'd him from his Prison.

2. Having thus seen the Person suffering, let us in the next Place see the Preparations of this Bloody Fact, and indeed it would be but a preposterous Course, to insist only on the Consequent, without taking notice of the Antecedent. It were too long to dig to the Spring of this Rebellion, and to lead up to the Secrecies of its first Contrivance; but as *David*'s Phrase is upon another Occasion, it was framed and fashioned in the lowest parts of the Earth, and there it was fearfully and wonderfully made a work of Darkness and Retirement, removed from the Eye of all Witnesses, even that of Conscience also; for Conscience was not admitted into their Council. But their first Design was to procure a *Levite* to Consecrate their Design, and a Factious Ministry to Christen it the Laws of God: They still own their Party for God's own *Israel*, and being so, it must needs be their Duty to come out of *Egypt*, though they provide themselves a Red Sea for their Passage.

For their Assistance they repair to the Northern Steel, and bring in an unnatural mercenary Crew, that like a shole of Locusts covered the Land, such as inherited the Description of those, which God brought upon his People the *Jews*; a Nation fierce, peopled and scattered; and still we shall read that God punished his People from the North, as *Jer.* 50. 3. *Out of the North comes Destruction, which shall make the Land desolate*, Jer. 4. 6. *I will bring evil from the North, and great Destruction.* Now to endear and unite these into one Interest, they invented a Covenant, much like to that which some are said to make with Hell, and an Agreement with Death. It was the most solemn piece of Perjury, the most fatal Engine against the Church and Bane of Monarchy, the greatest Snare of Souls and Mystery of Iniquity, that ever was hammered out by the Wit and Wickedness of Man. I shall not, as they do, abuse Scripture-Language, and call it the Blood of the Covenant, but give it its proper Title,

The

The Covenant of Blood; such an one as the Brethren, *Simeon* and *Levi*, made when they were going about the like Design; their very Posture of taking it was an ominous mark of its Intent; and their holding up their Hands, was a sign they were going to strike. It was such an Oleo of Treason and Tyranny, that one of the Assembly of their own Prophets gives this Testimony of it in his Narration upon it (and his Testimony is true) that it was such a Covenant, that whether you respect the Subject-Matter of it, or the Occasion of it, or the Persons engaged in it, or lastly, the manner of imposing it, the like was never read, seen, or heard of. The truth is, it bears no other likeness to other ancient Covenants, than as at the making of them; those slew Beasts and divided them, so this was solemniz'd with Blood, Slaughter and Division. But that I may not accuse in general, without a particular Charge, read it over as it stands prefixt to their Catechisms (as if without it their System of Divinity was not compleat, nor their Children like to become Christians, unless they were schooled to Treason, and Catechis'd to Rebellion) I say, in the Covenant as it stands here, in the third Article of it, after they had first promised to defend the Privileges of Parliament, and the Liberties of the Kingdom; at length they also promis'd to defend the Person of the King, *viz.* in the Preservation and Defence of the true Religion, and Liberties of the Kingdo; so that their Promises and Loyalty to him was not Absolute but Conditional, bound Hand and Foot with this Simulation, so far as he preserveth the true Religion and Liberties of the Kingdom. Now those very Persons who Covenanted thus, had already from Pulpit and Press declar'd, the Religion and way of Worship establish'd in the Church of *England*, and then maintain'd by the King, to be False, Popish and Idolatrous; and withal, that the King had invaded their Liberties. Now for Men to suspend their Obedience upon certain Conditions, which very Conditions they declar'd at the same time not perform'd, was not to profess Obedience, but remonstrate the Reasons of intended Disobedience. We see now the Doctrine of the Covenant; see now the use of this Doctrine, as it was charg'd home with a suitable Application, in a War raised against the King, in the cruel Usage and Imprisonment, Killing, Sequestring and Undoing all that adhered to him. All which Home proceedings, tho' his Majesty now stupendiously forgives, yet the World will not, cannot, yet forget; his Indemnity is not an Oblivion; and tho' those Persons who now clamour and cry out, they are Persecuted, because they are no longer permitted to Persecute, and who choose rather to quit the Ministry, than disown the Obligation of the Covenant, I leave to all impartial and understanding Minds to judge, whether they do not by this openly declare to the World, that they hold themselves obliged by Oath, as they are able, to act over again all that hath hitherto been done by virtue of the Covenant, and consequently that they left not places for being Non-Conformists to the Church, but for being virtualy Rebels to the Crown; which makes them just as worthy to be indulged, as a Dropsie, or a malignant Fever, which is exasperated by Mitigations, and inflamed by every cooling Infusion.

But to draw the Premiſes cloſer to the Purpoſe, I argue, That which was the proper means to enable the King's Enemies to make War againſt him, and upon that War to Conquer, and upon that Conqueſt to Impriſon, and inevitably to put the Power in the Hands of thoſe, who by that Power in the end did Murther him; That, according to the Genuine conſequence of Reaſon, was the natural Cauſe of his Murder. This is the Propoſition that I aſſerr, but I ſhall not trouble my ſelf to make the Aſſumption; and indeed thoſe who wipe their Mouths, and lick themſelves Innocent by clapping this Act upon the Army, make juſt the ſame Plea that *Pilate* did for his Innocency in the Death of Chriſt, becauſe he left the Execution to the Soldiers, or what the Soldiers may make for clearing themſelves of all this Blood that they have ſpilt, by charging it upon their Swords. I conclude therefore, that this was the gradual Proceſs to this horrid Act; this the Train laid to blow up Monarchy; this the Step by which the King aſcended the Scaffold.

3. Come we now in the third place to ſhew who were the Actors in this Tragick Scene; when through the Anger of Providence, the thriving Army of Rebels had worſted Juſtice, cleared the Field, ſubdued all Oppoſitions and Riſings, even to the very Inſurrections of Conſcience it ſelf; ſo that Impunity at length grew into Reputation of Piety, and Succeſs gave Rebellion the varniſh of Religion; that they might conſummate their Villany, the Gown was called in to compleat the Execution of the Sword; and to make *Weſtminſter-Hall* a place to take away Lives as well as Eſtates, a new Court was ſet up, and Judges pack'd, who had no more to do with Juſtice, than ſo far forth as they deſerved to be the Objects of it; in which they firſt begin with a Confutation of the *Civilians* Notion of Juſtice, and Juriſdiction, it being with them no longer an Act of the Supreme Power: Such an Inferior Crew, ſuch a Mechanick Rabble were they (having not ſo much as any Arms to ſhew the World, but what they uſed in Rebellion) that when I ſurvey the Liſt of the King's Judges, and the Witneſſes againſt him, I ſeem to have before me a Catalogue of all Trades, and ſuch as might have better filled the Shops of *Weſtminſter-Hall*, than ſat on the Benches; ſome of which came to be Poſſeſſors of the King's Houſes, who before had no certain dwelling but the King's High-way; and ſome might have continued Tradeſmen ſtill, had not Want and Inability to Trade ſent them to the War. Now that a King, ſuch a King, ſhould be Murther'd by ſuch, the baſeſt of his Subjects, and not like a *Nimrod* (as ſome ſanctified Preachers have called him) but like *Actæon*, torn by a pack of Blood-Hounds; that the ſteam of a Dunghil ſhould thus obſcure the Sun. This ſo much enhanceth the Calamity of his Royal Perſon, and makes his Death as different from his who is Conquered and Slain by another King, as is between being torn by a Lyon, and being eaten up by Vermin; pardon the Expreſſion, for it came into my Mind by ſpeaking of thoſe many, of which were ſome time Beggars. For the Feet to trample upon, yea kick at the Head, would it not look like a Monſter? But indeed, theſe of all others were the fitteſt Inſtruments for ſuch a Work; for baſe Deſcent and poor Education diſpoſeth the

Mind to Impiousnes and Cruelty: As of Beasts, those are the most Savage which are bred in Dens, and have their Extraction from under-Ground. These therefore were the whorty Judges and Condemners of that Great King: even the Refuse of the People, and the very Scum of the Nation, that was at that time both the uppermost and basest part of it.

4. Pass we now in the fourth Place to the Circumstances and Manner of proceeding in this Ugly Fact: And the Circumstances we know have the greatest cast in determining the nature of all Actions, as we judge of any one's Parts or Qualities by the nature of his Attendance. 1st. Then, it was not done like other Works of Darkness, in secret, nor (as they use to Preach) in a Corner, but publickly, coloured with the Face of Justice, managed with Openness and Solemnity, as Solemn as the League and Covenant it self. History indeed affords us many Examples of Princes clandestinely Murther'd, which, tho' it be Villanous, is in it self more excusable; for he that doeth such a thing in secret, by the manner of doing confesseth himself ashamed of the thing he does: But he that acts in the Face of the Sun, vouches his Work for Laudable, Glorious and Heroick. Having brought him to the High Court of Justice (so called I conceive, because Justice was there Arraign'd and Condemn'd, or perhaps because it never shewed Mercy) by a way of Trial as unheard of as the Court, being permitted not so much as to speak in his own Defence, but with the Innocence and Silence of a Lamb Condemn'd to Slaughter, and it would have been well for them if they could as easily have imposed Silence on his Blood. Being Condemn'd, they spit in his Face, and deliver'd him to Mockery and Affront of the Soldiers; so that I wonder where the Blasphemy lies, which some charge upon those who make the King's Suffering something resemble our Saviour's: but is it Blasphemy to compare the King to Christ in that respect, in which Christ himself was made like a Servant? For can he be like us in all Things, and we not like him? Certainly there was something in that Providence that appointed so long ago the Chapter to be read on the day of our Saviour's Passion, to be read likewise on the day of our King's; and I am sure that the resemblance is so near, that had he lived before him, he had been a Type of him. I confess there is some disparity in the Case, for they shewed themselves worse than the *Jews*. But however, since they object that we make the King like Christ, I am willing it should be their Commendation to be as unlike Christ as they please. Let us now follow him from their Mock-Tribunal to the place of his Residence, till his Execution; nothing remains for a Man Condemned, and presently to leave the World, but these two Things; 1st. To take leave of his Friends, a thing not denied to the ugliest Malefactor, which is sufficiently apparent in that it hath not been denied to themselves: Yet no Intreaties from him or his Royal Consort, could prevail with these Murtherers to let her take the last Farewel and Commands of her Dying Husband. He was permitted to take no Farewel but to the World. Thus was he stript of all, even from the Prerogative of a Prince to the Privilege of a Malefactor. The next thing desired by all dying Christians, is, freedom to converse with God, and to prepare themselves to meet him

him at his dreadful Tribunal ; but with an *Italian* cruelty to the Soul as well as the Body, they debar him of this freedom also, and even Solitude, his former Punishment is now too great an Enjoyment. But that they might shew themselves no less Enemies to the private, than they had been to publick Prayers, they disturb his Retirements, and with Scoffs and continual Calumnies upbraid those Devotions which were then interceding for them ; and I question not but that Fanatick Fury was at that height, that they would have laughed at Christ himself had he used his own Prayer.

With these Preludiums is he brought to the last Scene with Mockeries and Cruelty, to a Stage erected before his own Palace, and for a greater affront to Majesty, before that Part of it in which he was wont to display his Royalty, and to give Audience to Ambassadors, where now he could not obtain Audience for himself, in his last Addresses to his abused Subjects. There he receives the fatal Blow ; there he dies conquering and pardoning his Enemies, and at length finds that faithfully performed on the Scaffold, which was at first promised in the Parliament, and perhaps in the same Sence, that he should be a glorious King. And even this Death was the Mercy of the Murderers, considering what kind of Death several proposed, when they sat in Council about the manner of it, even no less than to execute him in his Robes, and afterwards to drive a Stake thro' his Head and Body to stand as a Monument on his Grave. In short, all kinds of Death were proposed, that either their Malice could suggest, or their own Guilt deserve. And would these then now find in their Hearts, or have the Face to desire to live ? and to plead a Pardon from the Son, who thus Murthered the Father ? I speak not only of those Wretches who openly embrued their Hands in the bloody Sentence, but of those more considerable Traitors who had the Villany to manage the Contrivance, and yet the Cunning to disappear at the Execution, and perhaps the good luck to be preferred after it. And for those who now survive, by a Mercy as incredible as their Crimes, which has left them to the soft Expiation of Solitude and Repentance, tho' usually all the Professions that such make of Repentance, are nothing else but the faint Resentment of a guilty Horrour, the Convulsions and last Breathings of a gasping Conscience. And as the Mercy by which they live is made a visible defiance to Government, and a standing Encouragement to these Alarms of Plots and Conspiracies : So I beseech God that even their supposed Repentance be not such, as both themselves and the Kingdom hereafter may have bitter cause too late to repent of. And if indeed they should prove such as have no Conscience but Horror, who by the same Crimes will be irreconcileable, for which they deserve to be unpardonable ; who would resume those Repentings upon Opportunities, which they made upon Extremity ; and being saved from the Gallows, make the usual requital that is made for that kind of Deliverance ; I say, if such Persons should not only for a time be chained, and tied up, like so many Lions in the *Tower*, that they may gain more Fierceness, and run again at Majesty, Religion, Laws, Churches and the Universities ; whether God intends by this a Repetition of our former Confusions, or a General Massacre of our

Persons

Persons (which is most likely) the Lord in his Mercy fit and enable us to endure the smart of a misimproved Providence, and the infatuate frustration of such a miraculous Deliverance.

But to return to this Blessed Martyr. We have seen him Murder'd; and is there any other Scene of Cruelty to act? Is not Death the end of the Murderers Malice, as well as the Life of him that is Murthered? No, there is another and viler Instance of their implacable Cruelty; in the very Imbalming of his Body, and taking out of his Bowels (which had they not relented to his Enemies, had not been so handled) they gave order to those to whom that Work was committed, diligently to search and see (I speak it with Shame and Indignation) whether his Body was not infected with some loathsome Disease, I suppose, that which some of his Judges were so much troubled with: Now any one may see, that farther to Intimate an Inquiry was, in effect, to enjoyn the Report. And here let any one judge, whether the remorsless Malice of imbittered Rebels, ever rose to such an heighth of Tyranny; the very Embalming his Body must be made a means of corrupting his Name; as if his Murder was not compleat, if, together with his Life, they did not assassinate his Fame, and butcher his Reputation: But the Body of that Prince, Innocent and Virtuous even to a Miracle, had none of the Ruins and genteel Rottenness of our Modern Debauchery; it was firm and clear like his Conscience: He fell like a Cedar, no less Fragrant than Tall and Stately; Rottenness of Heart and Bone belong to his Murtherers, the Noisomness of whose Carcasses, caused by the Noisomness of their Lives, might even retaliate and revenge their Sufferings, and while they are under the Execution, poyson the Executioner. But the last grand comprehensive Circumstance, which is as it were the very Form and Spirit that did actuate and run thro' all the rest, is, that it was done with the pretence of Conscience, and the Protestations of Religion, with Eyes lift up to Heaven, Expostulating with God, with Pleas of Providence and inward Instigations, till at last with much Labour and many Groans they were delivered of their conceived Mischief: And certainly we have cause to deplore this Murder with Fasting, if it were but for this Reason, that it was contrived and committed with Fasting; every Fast portended some Villany, as still a Famine ushers in a Plague: But as Hunger serves only for Appetite, so they never ordained an Humiliation, but for doing something, which being done might find them matter of a Thanksgiving; and such a Fury did abused Piety inspire into the Church Militant upon these Exercises, that we might as safely meet an hungry Boar, as a preaching Colonel after a Fast, whose murd'rous Humiliation, strangely verifie that Prophesie in *Isai.* 8. 2. *When they shall be hungry, they shall curse their King and their God, and look upwards*; that is, they should rebel and blaspheme devoutly; tho' by the way, he that is always looking upwards can little regard how he walks below.

But was there any thing in the whole Book of God to warrant this Rebellion? Instead of Obedience, will they Sacrifice him whom they ought to obey? Why yes: *Daniel* dreamed a Dream, and there is also something

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in the *Revelations* concerning a Beast, and a little Horn, and a fifth Vial, and therefore the King ought undoubtedly to dye; but if You nor I can gather so much from these places, they will tell us 'tis because we are not inwardly enlightned. But others more knowing, but not less wicked, insist not so much on the Warrant of it from Scripture, but plead Providential Dispensations; God's Works, it seems, must be regarded before his Words: and their *Latin* Advocate, Mr. *Milton*, who like a blind Adder has spit so much Poison on the King's Person and Cause, speaks to this roundly; *Deum secuti Ducem, & impressa passim Divina vestigia verantes, viam haud obscuram, sed illustrem, & illius auspiciis commonstratum & patefactum ingressi sumus.*

But must we read God's Mind in his Footsteps or in his Words? This is as if when we have a Man's Hand-writing, we should endeavour to rake this Meaning by the measure of his Foot. But still's Conscience pleading, a Covering for all Enormities, and an Answer to all Questions and Accusations also; what made them Fight against, Imprison, and Murder their Lawful Sovereign? Why Conscience. What made them extirpate the Government, and pocket up the Revenues of the Church? Conscience. What made them pursue themselves with contrary Oaths? What made Swearing a Sin, and Forswearing none? What made them lay hold on God's Promises, and break their own? Conscience. What made them Sequester, Persecute and Undo their Brethren, ravin their Estates, and ruin their Families, get into their Places, and then say they only rob the *Egyptians*? Why still this large capacious thing is Conscience. The Poet says, *Vis fieri dives, Bethinie; Conscius esto?* which I think may be properly construed thus, If you would be Rich, be (in their sense) Conscientious. We have liv'd under the Model of Religion, in which nothing has been counted Impious, but Loyalty, nor Absurd, but Restitution. But, Oh Blessed God! to what an height can prosperous, audacious Impiety rise? Was it not enough that Men once Crucified Christ, but that there must be a Generation of Men, who would Crucifie Christianity? Must he who taught no Defence but Patience, but allowed no Armour but Submission, and never warranted the shedding any Blood but his own, be now again mocked with Soldiers, and vouched the Author and Patron of all those hideous and rebellious Acts, which an ordinary Impiety would stand amazed at, and which in this World he has so plainly condemned in his Word, and will hereafter severely Sentence in his own Person? Certainly these Monsters are not only Spots in Christianity, but so many standing Exceptions from Human Nature.

5. In the Fifth and last Place, let us view the horridness of the Fact, in the fatal Consequences that did attend it. Every Villany is like a great Absurdity, drawing after it a numerous train of homogeneous Consequences, and none ever spread it self into more than this. But I shall endeavour to reduce them all into two sorts; such as were of a Civil, and such as were of a Religious Concern.

And

And first for the Civil Political Consequences of it; they immediately followed a change of that Government, whose praise had been proclaim'd even by its Enemies. It was now shred into Democracy; and the Stream of Government being cut into many Channels, ran thin and shallow; whereupon the Subjects had many Masters, and every Servant so many distinct Services. But the Wheel of Providence, which they only look'd at, and that even to giddiness, did not stop here, but by a fatal Vicissitude, the Power and Wickedness of those many, were again compacted into one, and from that one returning again into many, with several attending Variations, till at length we pitch'd upon one again, one beyond whom they could not go, the *Ne plus ultra* of all Regal Excellencies, as all Change tends to, and at last ceases upon its acquired Perfection. Nor was the Government only, but the Glory of our Nation also chang'd; distinction of Orders confounded, the Gentry and Nobility, who Voted the Bishops out of their Dignities in Parliament, by the just Judgment of God were thrust out themselves, and brought under the lash of an imperious Beggar on Horseback. Learning was discountenanced, and the Universities threatned; the Laws to be reform'd; the Model of the Nation to be burnt; such an inundation of Deluge and Ruin, Reformation and Confusion had spread it self upon the whole Nation, that it seem'd a kind of resemblance of *Noah*'s Flood, in which a few Men surviv'd among Beasts.

The Second sort of Consequences were of Religious Concerns. I speak not of the Contempts and Rebukes lying upon the Preachers of those Days; for they brought their Miseries upon themselves, and had a great deal more cause to curse their own seditious Sermons, than to curse *Meroz*. They sounded the first Trumpet to Rebellion, and like the Saints, had Grace to persevere in what they first began; courting an Usurper, and calling themselves his Loyal and Obedient Subjects, never endeavouring so much as to think of their lawful Soveraign. I speak not therefore of these; but the great destructive Consequence of this Fact was, That it left a lasting stur upon the Protestant Religion. *Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the Streets of Askelon, lest the Daughters of the Philistians triumph, lest the Papacy laugh us to scorn.* I confess the seditious Writings of some who call themselves Protestants, have sufficiently bespattered their Religion. See *Calvin* warranting the three States to oppose their Prince, 4 *Just.* 20*th.* 31. See Mr. *Knox*'s Appeal, and in that Arguments for resisting the Civil Magistrate. Read Mr. *Buchanan*'s Discourse, *De jure Regni apud Scotis.* Read *Vindiciæ contra Tyrannos*, under the Name of *Junius Brutus*, writ by *Ottoman* the *Civilian*. See *Pareus* on the 30th to the *Romans*, where he states a large Term, *atrocem aliquam injuria*, and a very easie Application to be sufficient reason for the taking up Arms against the King. But this rather a Comment on the Covenant, than on the 12th to the *Romans*. Both of which, as they teach the same Doctrine, so they deserved and had justly the same Confutation. But these Principles, like sleeping Lions, lay still a great

a great while, and never were compleatly awaked, nor appeared in the Field, till the *French* Holy League, and the *Engliſh* Rebellion. Let the Powder-Plot be ſo bad as 'twill, yet ſtill there is as much difference between that and the King's Murder, as between an Action and Attempt: What Bulls and Anathema's could not do, ſeditious Sermons have brought about. What was then contriv'd againſt the Parliament, has ſince been done by it. What the Papiſts Powder intended, the Soldiers Matches have effected. I ſay, let the Powder-Plot be look'd upon, as indeed it is, the product of Hell, as black as the Souls and Principles that hatcht it; yet ſtill this Reformation Murder will preponderate, and *January* always have the precedency of *November*.

And thus I have traced this accurſed Fact through all the Parts and Ingredients of it: And now if we reflect upon the Quality of the Perſon upon whom it was done; the Condition of the Perſons that did it; the Means, Manner and Circumſtances of its Tranſaction: I ſuppoſe it will fill up the Meaſure, and reach the heights of the Words in the Text, *That there was never ſuch a thing done or ſeen ſince the day that the Children of Iſrael came up out of the Land of Egypt until this day.* For my part, my Apprehenſions of it overcharge my Expreſſions, and how to ſet it off I know not, for black receives no other Colour: But when I call to mind all the Ideas of Horror, and all the Records of the *Grecian* and *Barbarian* Murders, together with new-fancied Inſtances, and unheard-of Poſſibilities, yet I find none parallel; and therefore have this only to ſay of the King's Murder, That 'tis a thing, than which nothing can be imagin'd more ſtrange, and amazing, and aſtoniſhing, except its Pardon.

And now having done with the Firſt part of my Text, does it not naturally engage me in the Second? Muſt ſuch a Deed as was neither ſeen nor heard of, neither be ſpoken of, or muſt it be ſtrok'd with ſmooth mollifying Expreſſions? Is this the way to cure the Wound, by pouring Oil upon thoſe that made it? And muſt *Abſalom* be therefore dealt gently with, becauſe he was a ſturdy Rebel? If, as the Text bids us, we conſider the Fact, and take Advice with Reaſon and Conſcience, we cannot but obey it in the following words, and ſpeak our Minds. For could *Cræſus*'s dumb Son ſpeak upon the very attempting a Murther upon his Prince and Father, and ſhall a Preacher be dumb when ſuch an Action is committed? Therefore having not yet finiſhed my Text, nor according to the command of it, ſpoken all my Mind, I have one thing more to propoſe, and with that to conclude.

Would you be willing to ſee this Scene acted over again? To ſee that reſtleſs plotting Humor that now boils and foments in many Traitors Breaſts, once more diſplay it ſelf in the diſmal Effects of War and Deſolation? Would you ſee the raſcality of the Nation in Troops and Tumults beleague the Royal Palace? Would you hear the Miniſters abſolving their Congregations from their ſacred Oath of Allegiance, and ſending them into the Field to loſe their Lives and Souls in a pro-

profeſſed Rebellion againſt their Soveraign? Would you ſee an inſolent over-turning Army in the Heart and Bowels of the Nation, moving to and fro to the terror of every thing that is Noble, Generous and Religious? Would you ſee the Loyal Gentry harraſt, ſtarv'd and undone, by the Oppreſſion of baſe inſulting Committees? Would you ſee the Clergy torn in pieces, and ſacrificed by the Inquiſition of Synods, Triers and Commiſſioners? And to mention the greateſt laſt; would you have the King, with his Father's Kingdoms, inherit alſo his Fortunes? Would you ſee the Crown trampled upon, Majeſty haled from Priſon to Priſon, and at length with the vileſt Circumſtances of Spight and Cruelty, Bleeding and Dying at the Feet of bloody inhuman Miſcreants? Would you, now Providence has caſt the deſtructive Intereſt from the Parliament, and the Houſe is pretty well ſwept and cleanſed, have the old unclean Spirit return, and take to it ſelf ſeven other Spirits, ſeven other Intereſts worſe than it ſelf, and dwell there, and ſo make our latter End worſe than our beginning? We hear of Plots and Combinations, Parties joyning and agreeing, and let us not truſt too much in their Oppoſitions among themſelves. The Elements can fight with each other, and yet unite into one Body; *Ephraim* againſt *Manaſſes*, and *Manaſſes* againſt *Ephraim*, and both equally againſt the Royal Real Tribe of *Judah*. Now if we fear the letting looſe the Furies again upon us, let us fear the returns of our former Provocations: If we would keep off the Ax from our Princes and Nobles, let us lay it to our Sins; if we would preſerve their Lives, let us mend our own. We have complain'd of Armies, Committees, Sequeſtrations, but our Sins are thoſe that have ſuck'd the Blood of this Nation. Theſe have purpel'd the Scaffold with Royal Blood; theſe have blown up ſo many Noble Families, have made ſo many Widows, have ſnatch'd the Bread out of the Mouths of ſo many poor Orphans. 'Tis our not fearing God hath made others not Honour the King; our not benefiting by the Ordinance of the Church, that hath enrich'd others with her Spoils? And how is our Church (the only Church in *Chriſtendom* we read of, whoſe arm'd Principles and Practices diſown all Reſiſtance of the Civil Power) ſtruck and laid at this time? But when I hear of Conſpiracies, Seditions, Deſigns, Covenants or Plots, they do not much move or affright me: But when I ſee the ſame Covetouſneſs, the ſame Drunkenneſs and Prophaneneſs, that was firſt puniſhed in our ſelves, and then in our ſanctified Enemies: When I ſee Joy turned into Revelling, and Debauchery proclaim'd louder than it can be proclaim'd againſt. Theſe, I confeſs, ſtagger and aſtoniſh me; nor can I perſuade my ſelf we were deliver'd to do all theſe Abominations. But if we have not the Grace of Chriſtians, yet have we not the Hearts of Men? Have we no Bowels nor Relentings? If the Blood and Baniſhment of our King cannot move us; if the Miſeries of our common Mother the Church, ready to fall back into the Jaws of Purchaſers and Reformers, yet ſhall we not at leaſt pity our Poſterity? Shall we commit Sins, and breed up our Children

to

to inherit the Curſe? Shall the Infants now unborn have cauſe to ſay hereafter in the bitterneſs of their Souls, Our Fathers have eaten ſowr Grapes of Diſobedience, and our Teeth are ſet on edge with Rebellion and Confuſions? How doth any one know, but the Oath that he is now ſwearing, the very lewdneſs he is now committing, may be ſcored up by God as an *Item* for a new Rebellion? We may be Rebels and yet not Vote in Parliament, nor ſit in Committees, nor fight in Armies every Sin is virtually Treaſon, and we may be guilty of Murder in breaking other Commandments beſides the Sixth. But at preſent we are made whole, God hath by a Miracle healed our Breaches, cured the Maladies and bound up the Wounds of a bleeding Nation. What remains now but that we take the Counſel that ſeconded the like miraculous Cure? *Go your ways, ſin no more, leſt a worſe thing come upon us.* But ſince our Calamities have reached that height, that they give us rather cauſe to fear a Repetition, than a poſſibility of Gradation: I ſhall diſmiſs you with the ſame Advice upon a different Motive, *Go, ſin no more, leſt the ſame Evil befal you.* Which God of his infinite Mercy prevent, even that God, by whom Kings Reign, and Princes decree Juſtice; by whom their Thrones are Eſtabliſhed, and by whom their Blood will be revenged.

To whom, &c. *Amen.*

FINIS.